

I Had to Bid Something... Right?



What Do You Do When...

- You have a good hand and an opponent opens the bidding and you have opening count, but no suit to bid?
 - A takeout double – maybe.
 - 1 no trump – maybe.
 - Bid a suit –maybe.
 - Pass – sometimes.
- Deciding what to bid and when to bid requires good judgement.
- After a poor matchpoint score, I have often heard players say, “I had x points, I had to bid, didn’t I?”

Here's an Example

♠ Q 2
♥ 7 3 2
♦ A J 10 5
♣ A Q 9 3

- 13 points. You would open the hand if you could.
- RHO opens 1 ♥.
 - 1nt? Too weak
 - Double? What will you do when partner bids spades?
 - Bid a 4-card suit at the two level? Not a good idea.
 - Pass? The correct call.

Here's an Example

♠ Q 2
♥ 7 3 2
♦ A J 10 5
♣ A Q 9 3

- The same problem if RHO opens 1 ♦ or 1 ♣.
- You have no sensible bid.
- Best to pass.

Here's Another Example With 1 ♣

♠ Q 9 2
♥ A 8 2
♦ K J 10
♣ Q 9 7 3

- Too weak for 1nt.
- If you double, no matter what partner bids, she will be disappointed with your hand.
- Pass is the right bid.

Here's a principle to keep in mind: ***Holding a balanced hand, if you cannot find a good fit, pass.***

RHO Opens With 1 ♠. Do You Act?

♠ A 10 9 2

♥ A Q 8 2

♦ K J 4 3

♣ 3

- If you double, you might get lucky.
- Partner might bid a red suit.
- Odds are he will bid clubs.
- If you pass. LHO might pass,
 - Partner might reopen with clubs.
 - Or a double.

RHO Opens With 1 ♠. Do You Act?

♠ A K 9 6 2
♥ A K 8 2
♦ J 4
♣ 7 3

- 15 points.
- Opener's suit well stopped.
- NT not a good bid. If no trump is right, partner should be declarer.
- Partner might reopen with a double.

You're in 4th Seat. Do You Act?

♠ K J
♥ K J 10
♦ K Q 8 7 4
♣ J 7 3

| LHO | Partner | RHO | You |
|-----|---------|-----|-----|
| 1 ♠ | pass | 2 ♣ | ?? |

- 14 points.
- They're playing 2/1.
- What kind of hand does partner have?
- Partner does not have a point in her hand.
- If you bid 2 ♦ and get doubled, you'll need to call 911.

Another Common Mistake

None vulnerable

♠ 6

♥ A Q J 10 9 7 2

♦ 7 4

♣ 9 7 3

| You | LHO | Partner | RHO |
|-----|--------|---------|-----|
| 3 ♥ | double | Pass | 4 ♠ |
| ?? | | | |

Partner's Hand

♠ A 8 2

♥ 6 3

♦ A J 6 5 3

♣ J 8 5

- What are you thinking, here?
- I have no defense against 4 ♠.
- Solid suit 6 tricks for sure.
- Better bid 5 ♥ .
- They can make 4s = 420
- You will be down 3 = 500

Would You Open This Hand in 1st Or 2nd Seat

♠ K 5 2
♥ Q 7 4
♦ K Q 5
♣ Q J 7 3

- 13 points.
- 3-3-3-4 Worst distribution in bridge.
- Not just for suit contracts, but also for no trump.

Would You Open This Hand in 1st Or 2nd Seat?

♠ Q 2
♥ K J 7 4
♦ K J 5 3
♣ Q J 3

- 13 points.
- 2-4-4-3 slightly better distribution than the last example.
- Still not worth opening.
- Open this hand in 3rd seat.
- Not in 4th seat.
- I Know, it makes the rule of 15, but still not a good 4th seat opener.

Would You Open This Hand in 1st Or 2nd Seat?

♠ 9 2
♥ K Q J 7
♦ A 10 5 3
♣ K 7 3

- 13 points.
- 2-4-4-3 Note the quality heart suit.
- A much better hand.
- Open this hand in any of the first 3 seats
- Not in 4th seat.

The Trap Pass

♠ 9 2
♥ Q 10 7
♦ K 10 7 5
♣ A Q 10 8

| Partner | RHO | You |
|---------|-----|-----|
| 1 ♠ | 2 ♣ | ?? |

- 11 points.
- You can make 4 ♠ or 3 no trump.
- If they are vulnerable and you are not vulnerable, you must pass and wait for partner to reopen with a double.
- If vulnerability is even, you should pass.

4th Seat Bid

♠ 9 2
♥ K J 10 6 4 2
♦ 10 7
♣ K 8 4

| | | | |
|------|---------|------|-----|
| LHO | Partner | RHO | You |
| pass | pass | pass | ?? |

- 7 high-card points.
- In 1st, 2nd, or 3rd seat, a reasonable weak 2 ♥ bid.
- Not in 4th seat.
- Why not?
 - Opponents may well have a spade fit.
 - There's a good chance you will go down a trick or two.
 - A weak-two bid in 4th seat should have 11-13 points.

2nd Seat Problem

♠ A Q 9
♥ 10 6 4 2
♦ A 7 3
♣ Q J 2

RHO
3 ♦

You
??

LHO Partner

- 13 points.
- Are you tempted to make a takeout double?
- You should resist the temptation.
- You have too many diamonds.
- Guide lines
 - When you have 3 or more cards in an opponent's 3-level preempt.
 - A borderline takeout double hand ... Pass

Final Thoughts

- Good bridge is aggressive bridge.
- We should get into the bidding whenever we have the right hand to do so.
- Nevertheless, there are times when a pass is the best call.
- Simply counting points is not enough.
- You must think about:
 - Your distribution
 - The situation at the table.