

# Reverses

## What is a Reverse?

Lower-ranking suit bid before higher ranking suit

Contrast with normal bidding sequence

Forces bidding a level higher than otherwise

Responder forced to three-level

## When do I use a Reverse?

You use a Reverse (bid) when you have a hand that exceeds the strength that would be expected of a minimum opening or responding hand, an unbalanced (two-suited) hand, and a hand where the lower-ranking suit is equal or greater in length than the higher-ranking suit.

## What does a Reverse promise?

A minimum of five cards in the first suit bid

A minimum of four cards in the second suit bid

A hand that is invitational to game

(Generally) a concentration of honors in the suits bid

## What do I need for a Reverse?

As opener...

5-4 distribution as described above

A minimum of 16 “working” HCP; enough to invite game versus minimum responder

As responder...

5-4 distribution as described above

A minimum of 11 “working” HCP; enough to invite game versus minimum opener

## As a responder, what do I do when my partner Reverses?

Bid; do not pass your partner’s Reverse unless you **severely** lied on your first bid, have a misfit, and have more tolerance for your partner’s second suit

If you reject the invitation for game...

If you have a preference for partner’s first suit, return to that suit

If you have a preference for partner’s second suit, raise

If you have a weak hand and a 6-card suit that you have bid once, rebid it at the lowest possible level

If you have a stopper (or sufficient length) in each of the other two suits, bid 2NT (if possible)

If you accept the invitation for game...

If you have a clear preference for either of partner's suits, and the minimum values for game, bid it

If you have no fit for partner, but have solid stoppers in each of the other suits, bid 3NT

If you have no particular preference for partner's suits, a five-card suit you have already shown, and have general values for game, use either New Minor Forcing (if possible) or Fourth Suit Forcing (if possible) to inquire about 3-card support from your partner

### **If you play 2/1, do reverses still mean the same thing?**

There are two basic versions of the 2/1 Game Forcing system. It is important to discuss with your partner which version you are playing.

In the Max Hardy version, Reverses by opener after a 2/1 response indicate the shape of the hand only; they do not indicate additional strength

In the Mike Lawrence version, Reverses by opener after a 2/1 response indicate additional strength as in Standard American

In any system, a Reverse by responder is still an invitational bid

### **I don't play Reverses... is that okay?**

Everybody plays Reverses, it's just that they don't mean anything special in your system. This is very dangerous, because Reverses force your partner to a higher level than a non-Reverse bid. Without the indicated strength to make such a bid, your partnership can quickly find themselves beyond any level of contract that can be made and without any real fit.