

## Tools of the Trade (2) - Reverses

After an opening of one of a suit, a reverse is a bid that can be used on opener's second turn to show extra strength. The reverse shows an unbalanced hand with at least 16 HCP.

A reverse is a bid of a new suit that has been skipped by responder. As well as 16 or more HCP, a reverse promises at least five cards in the first suit bid and at least four in the second suit.

Suppose you open 1♦, and partner responds 1♠. This is your hand.

♠ A 2
♥ K J 4 2
♦ A Q T 7 3
♣ Q 2

Partner skipped hearts to bid 1♠. If you now bid 2♥, you are promising at least five diamonds, at least four hearts and at least 16 HCP.

Again you open 1♦, and partner responds 1♠. This time your hand is weaker.

♠ 8 2
♥ K J 4 2
♦ A Q T 7 3
♣ Q 2

With only 12 HCP, you bid 2♦.

Both reverses and a rebid of your original suit show five cards in that suit. Rebidding the suit is weak while reversing is strong.

More examples of reverses:

♠ A 2
♥ Q 2
♦ A K 7 3
♣ Q J T 8 2

You open 1♣ and partner responds 1♥.

You rebid 2♦, a suit that partner skipped. This is a reverse showing 5 or more clubs, 4 or more diamonds and 16 or more HCP.

♠ K 4
♥ Q J 7 5
♦ A K 9 8 2
♣ K 2

You open 1♦ and partner responds 1NT.

You rebid 2♥, a suit that partner skipped. This is a reverse showing 5 or more diamonds, 4 or more hearts and 16 or more HCP.

♠ K Q T 4
♥ J 5
♦ A K 9 8 2
♣ K 2

You open 1♦ and partner responds 2♣.

You rebid 2♠, a suit that partner skipped. This is a reverse showing 5 or more diamonds, 4 or more spades and 16 or more HCP.

## *So partner reversed! What next?*

There are sophisticated systems for responding to partner's reverse. However, the following simple and natural method is very effective.

Firstly, decide whether your hand is weak or strong. It is strong if there are enough points for game. Otherwise, it is weak.

### With a Weak Hand

Remember to count distributional points when supporting partner's suit.

With a weak hand, you can:

- raise partner's first suit with nine or less total points.
- raise partner's second suit with nine or less total points.
- repeat your own suit with eight or less HCP
- Bid 2NT with eight or less HCP

Some examples:

<p>♠ K Q 6 3 2 ♥ J T 4 2 ♦ 6 3 ♣ 7 2</p>	<p>Partner opens 1♦, you bid 1♠ and partner bids 2♥. A reverse. With four card support of hearts and eight fit points, bid 3♥.</p>
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<p>♠ K 6 3 2 ♥ T 8 4 ♦ 3 2 ♣ K T 6 2</p>	<p>Partner opens 1♣, you bid 1♠ and partner bids 2♥. A reverse. With no diamond stopper, bid 3♣.</p>
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<p>♠ K 3 2 ♥ K T 8 4 ♦ 6 3 2 ♣ J 6 2</p>	<p>Partner opens 1♣, you bid 1♥ and partner bids 2♦. A reverse. With a spade stopper, prefer 2NT to 3♣.</p>
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<p>♠ K Q J 3 2 ♥ T 5 2 ♦ 7 4 3 ♣ Q 2</p>	<p>Partner opens 1♣, you bid 1♠ and partner bids 2♦. A reverse. With nothing much outside spades, repeat your own suit. 2♠.</p>
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## With a Strong Hand

Remember to count distributional points when supporting partner's suit. Showing a strong hand puts the partnership into a game-forcing auction. You can:

- Jump in partner's first suit with ten or more total points.
- Jump in partner's second suit with ten or more total points.
- Jump in your own suit with nine or more HCP
- Bid 3NT with nine or more HCP
- rarely, bid the fourth suit with nine or more HCP

Some examples:

♠ K Q 6 3 2  
♥ K T 4 2  
♦ 3  
♣ 7 6 2

Partner opens 1♦, you bid 1♠ and partner bids 2♥. A reverse.

With four card support of hearts and eleven fit points, bid 4♥.

♠ K 6 3 2  
♥ T 8 4  
♦ 3 2  
♣ A Q 6 2

Partner opens 1♣, you bid 1♠ and partner bids 2♥. A reverse.

With twelve fit points in clubs, bid 4♣. No trumps would be very risky with no diamond cover.

♠ A Q 2  
♥ K T 8 4  
♦ 6 3 2  
♣ J 6 2

Partner opens 1♣, you bid 1♥ and partner bids 2♦. A reverse.

With a spade stopper and 10 HCP, bid 3NT.

♠ A K J 6 3 2  
♥ T 5 2  
♦ 7 3  
♣ Q 2

Partner opens 1♣, you bid 1♠ and partner bids 2♦. A reverse.

With nothing much outside spades, Jump in your own suit. 3♠.

♠ K 9 6 3 2  
♥ A T 8 4  
♦ 3 2  
♣ K 2

Partner opens 1♣, you bid 1♠ and partner bids 2♦. A reverse.

Partner has five clubs and four diamonds. With ten HCP, bid 2♥ in the hope that partner also has three spades or four hearts.

## Deal 1

	North	
	♠ 8 2 ♥ A K 4 3 ♦ A 9 6 5 2 ♣ A K	
West		East
♠ Q 6 ♥ Q J 5 ♦ Q J T ♣ T 7 5 4 3		♠ K J 9 4 ♥ 9 2 ♦ K 8 7 3 ♣ J 8 6
	South	
	♠ A T 7 5 3 ♥ T 8 7 6 ♦ 4 ♣ Q 9 2	

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♥ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	3♥ <sup>(2)</sup>
Pass	4♥ <sup>(3)</sup>	All Pass	

1. A reverse with 18 HCP, five diamonds and four hearts
2. Minimum hand with support for hearts
3. 20 total points is enough for game

Before drawing trumps, cash the ace and king of clubs along with the ace of diamonds. Ruff a diamond in dummy and discard a losing spade on the third club. A trump to the ace and another diamond ruff should pave the way to ten or even eleven tricks.

## Deal 2

	North	
	♠ J T 5 ♥ A 8 7 4 ♦ T 8 7 2 ♣ Q 6	
West		East
♠ K Q 7 3 ♥ Q J 2 ♦ Q 9 3 ♣ 9 8 5		♠ A 2 ♥ K 3 ♦ A J 5 4 ♣ K J T 4 3
	South	
	♠ 9 8 6 4 ♥ T 9 6 5 ♦ K 6 ♣ A 7 2	

West	North	East	South
		1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♦ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass
3NT <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass	Pass	Pass

1. A reverse with five clubs, four diamonds and 16 HCP.
2. Checkback
3. Ten HCP is enough for a strong response. With a flat hand, prefer 3NT to supporting clubs.

There are only four top tricks. A finesse of the club queen will provide four tricks from clubs. Diamonds and hearts will supply enough additional tricks to make game.

Fortunately, the hearts break evenly so the defence can only get two tricks from that suit.

## Deal 3

	North	
	♠ 9 7 4 ♥ A Q 9 5 3 ♦ T 7 5 ♣ 7 5	
West		East
♠ A Q 8 6 ♥ T 6 4 ♦ A 6 3 ♣ T 9 8		♠ K J T 5 2 ♥ J 2 ♦ 9 8 4 ♣ Q 4 2
	South	
	♠ 3 ♥ K 8 7 ♦ K Q J 2 ♣ A K J 6 3	

West	North	East	South
			1♣
Pass	1♥	Pass	2♦ <sup>(1)</sup>
Pass	2♥ <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass	4♥ <sup>(3)</sup>
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. A reverse with five clubs, four diamonds and 17 HCP.
2. Minimum hand with five hearts
3. 20 fit points for hearts. Game is on.

There are seven top tricks and three more can come from diamonds. The worry is that the defence can grab three spade tricks if they gain the lead after trumps are drawn. There are two ways to avoid this. Either ruff a spade before drawing all of the trumps or establish the club suit by ruffing the third club. With the clubs breaking nicely, the club suit will work better. Still, either way guarantees the contract.

## Deal 4

	North	
	♠ 9 7 ♥ Q J 8 6 ♦ J 8 7 5 ♣ Q 9 2	
West		East
♠ Q T 5 ♥ 3 ♦ A K 9 3 ♣ A K T 8 6		♠ A J 4 3 2 ♥ A 7 4 2 ♦ 4 2 ♣ 7 3
	South	
	♠ K 8 6 ♥ K T 9 5 ♦ Q T 6 ♣ J 5 4	

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦ <sup>(1)</sup>	Pass	2♥ <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass
2♠ <sup>(3)</sup>	Pass	4♠ <sup>(4)</sup>	Pass

1. A reverse with five clubs, four diamonds and 16 HCP.
2. A game going hand with five spades and four hearts
3. Spades it is. With 19 total points, that is better than minimum so use "slow arrival" in a game forcing auction.
4. Nothing extra. Settle for game.

A bit like deal three, there is a danger of losing a lot of heart tricks if trumps are drawn too early. Once again, the clubs break kindly. After ruffing a heart and a club, draw trumps and discard losers on the last two clubs. With a bit of luck, you may wrap up 12 tricks.