

MISCELLANEOUS CUE BIDS

Cue Bids in Partner's Suit

South	West	North	East
1♠	2♣	Dbl *	3♣

* Business double

When partner's suit has been doubled for business at a low level, his suit has really become the opponents' suit. A bid in this suit is therefore a cue bid, asking partner to take a choice between the unbid suits. In the auction above, East has a monstrous two-suiter in hearts and diamonds, perhaps 6-6. He also has a fair hand, since he would have to pass (or perhaps run to one of the red suits) with a bad hand. West can make a jump preference with the right cards: ♠9432 ♥AQ3 ♦K ♣QJ1097. Of course the 3♣ bid is a normal weak raise if the double is of the negative variety.

At higher levels it is entirely possible to make a natural bid in partner's suit, even when it has been doubled:

South	West	North	East
1♣	4♦	Dbl	5♦

Even if the double is for business, East may have a logical 5♦ bid. He figures that South is going to bid a major and wants to preempt with 5♦. He might have: ♠542 ♥873 ♦Q1084 ♣A65. There is no way that partner will buy the hand for 4♦ doubled, and 5♦ must be a good save.

Telling Cue Bids

When the opponents have shown two suits naturally, and both partners have previously bid or made a business (not a takeout) double, a cue bid in one of the opposing suits shows a stopper in that suit. It suggests that partner bid notrump if she has the other suit stopped:

South	West	North	East
1♣	1♠	2♦	2♥
2♠ - Telling Cue Bid, spades stopped			

South has spades stopped and values for 2NT, but lacks enough in diamonds for a 2NT bid. North can now bid 2NT with diamonds stopped, regardless of his spade holding. With a good hand, he should bid 3NT, because South will pass 2NT with a minimum hand. Raising a Telling Cue Bid shows a stopper in the *other* opposing suit. The raise is indicated when holding a non-vulnerable stopper in the other suit, as partner's stopper may be vulnerable (e.g., Kx, Qxx).

South	West	North	East
1♣	1♦	2♣	2♥ - transfer to spades
2♠/3♦ - telling cue bid, showing a stopper			

This principle is applied differently in takeout double situations. See Section 10-9, Cue Bids in Takeout Double Situations. It does not apply when the cue bidder has not previously acted:

South	West	North	East
1♣	1♦	1♥	2♥ - strong diamond raise
			2♣ - natural
			3♦ - normal diamond raise

See section 10-7, Cue Bid Responses to Overcalls.

Non-Forcing Cue Bids

When an opponent has made an artificial bid, a bid in that suit is natural, not forcing, in the absence of some conventional understanding.

A delayed cue bid, i.e., a bid in an enemy suit after that suit has been passed, is in general a non-forcing natural bid:

South	West	North	East
1♥	Pass	1NT	Pass
Pass	2♥	- natural, not forcing	

South	West	North	East
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♥	3♦	- natural, not forcing	

In a minor suit, however, after a 1NT response:

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1NT	Pass
Pass	2♣	- takeout for the majors	

South	West	North	East
1♦	Pass	1NT	2♦ - takeout for majors

The opponents will usually have at least six cards in the minor between them, so the cue bid is more useful as a major suit takeout than as a natural bid. In the first auction, West has a hand that is not suitable for a (business) double of 1NT: ♠Q1043 ♥K10875 ♦A ♣873. As is usual for responding to an artificial takeout bid,, East will prefer the lower ranking suit (hearts) with equal length. Also see section 10-5, Reopening Cue Bid Overcalls.

A bid in opener's suit is not forcing when RHO has made a new suit response:

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1♥	2♣ - natural
			2♥ - spades/diamonds
			Dbl - spades/diamonds
			2NT - natural

The 2♥ bid shows at least 5-5 in spades/diamonds, while the takeout double implies only four spades. The 2NT bid is no doubt based on a solid diamond suit plus stoppers.

When partner has overcalled and RHO bids a new suit or notrump, a bid of opener's suit is natural:

South	West	North	East
1♥	1♠	1NT/2♣	2♥ - natural

The following is a forcing cue bid, not a natural bid:

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♠ - cue bid, forcing		

The partnership has not been "previously silent," so this is a cue bid. See section 10-12, Probing Cue Bids.

Also see section 8-4, Notrump Overcalls; section 10-7, Cue Bid Responses to Overcalls; and section 10-9, Cue Bids in Takeout Double Situations.