

CUE BIDS BY OPENER

Partner Has Responded in a Suit

South	West	North	East
1♣	1♥	1♠	Pass
2♥ - game forcing			

This cue bid has traditionally shown no losers in the opposing suit and terrific support for responder's suit. Today that is what we would like to have, but the modern meaning of the cue bid is much less precise. All that responder can tell at this point is that opener wants to be in game, at least.

Responder must now make the most helpful bid he can find, which is likely to be notrump if he has the opposing suit stopped. With a double stop and a *poor* hand, he can jump to 3NT. This will warn opener that there may be serious duplication (strength opposite a void), and that responder is weak.

In the auction above, South could have any of the following hands:

- 1) ♠AQ32 ♥ void ♦K1083 ♣AKJ94 (the traditional hand)
- 2) ♠A4 ♥32 ♦KQ ♣AKQJ976 (too good for a 3♣ rebid)
- 3) ♠AJ3 ♥4 ♦AJ4 ♣AKQ874 (ditto)
- 4) ♠A54 ♥87 ♦KQJ ♣AKQJ4

With hand 1) opener will follow up with a leap to 4♠ or a repeat of the cue bid. Bidding in this fashion shows the old-fashioned sort of cue bid. With hand 2) opener will rebid clubs on the next round, implying this sort of hand. With a weaker hand he would prefer a 3♣ jump rebid, so this sequence is very strong. With hand 3) opener will raise spades on the next round, feeling his way to the proper contract. He will do the same with hand 4). There is no need to do any jumping with hands 2), 3), and 4), because the cue bid is forcing to game.

Partner Has Failed to Respond

South	West	North	East
1♣	1♥	Pass	Pass
2♥			

South	West	North	East
1♣	1♥	Pass	2♥
3♥			

South cannot be making game forces after only opening one of a suit and not getting a response, but the above cue bids show a very strong hand and are forcing to a limit situation. Opener could have four card support for both unbid suits (♠AK87 ♥ void ♦A1098 ♣AK1097), or a long strong suit with some support for one or both unbid suits (♠AJ3 ♥ void ♦Q107 ♣AKQJ873).

Such cue bids almost guarantee a void. Otherwise it is difficult to give opener a hand that is unsuitable for a takeout double. The implication is that opener would not relish a leave-in of a takeout double, and this implication strongly suggests a void.

Responder must now bid the full value of her hand, for if she makes a minimum bid the "limit situation" has been reached and opener could pass.

Additional cue bids by opener are covered in section 10-9, Cue Bids in Takeout Double Situations; section 10-10, Slam Try Cue Bids; and section 10-12, Probing Cue Bids.