

# Better Bidding with Bergen



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## Slam bidding

After a limit raise, opener should not consider slam without a singleton or a void.

Responder's limit raise shows about 11 points. Even after re-evaluating, opener needs 22 points to total the 33 required for slam. He won't have that many high-card points after opening a one bid. A very strong hand is not enough; opener also needs great shape.

West	North	East	South
Pass	3♥	Pass	1♥
♠J8	♥AKQJ7	♦AQ5	♣KJ2

Bid 4♥. South has 21 HCP but too many holes to fill.

♠AQ	♥KQJ986	♦KJ	♣Q63
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Bid 4♥. Slam chances are too slim to worry about; partner would need the perfect hand.

♠AK104	♥AQ9853	♦A5	♣4
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Cuebid 3♠ with this lovely 6-4 hand that includes three first-round controls.

## Thanks again, Mr. Jacoby

When responder wants to make a forcing raise in opener's major, Jacoby 2NT is an excellent convention to use to explore for slam.

The 2NT bid (Alertable) promises four (or more) of opener's major and 13 or more points, including distribution. There is no upper limit and responder's hand is usually balanced. Both players, however, must know what happens next.

With a singleton or void, opener bids his short suit at the three level. His bid says nothing about the strength of his hand.

If he has a strong five-card side suit and a minimum opening bid, he can convey that information by jumping in his second suit.

With no singleton or void, opener will define his strength with an artificial bid. If 1♥ was opened,

opener rebids 3♥ with 18 or more points, 3NT with 15 to 17 and 4♥ with 12 to 14. Note that the cheaper the bid, the better the hand.

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

West	East
1♠	2NT <sup>(1)</sup>
4♠ <sup>(2)</sup>	Pass

(1) Jacoby 2NT.  
 (2) Minimum, balanced opener.  
 East had visions of sugar plums when West opened 1♠. When West showed a minimum, balanced hand with his 4♠ rebid, however, East wisely called it a day.

West	East
♠ A J 10 4 3	♠ K 9 8 5 2
♥ 7	♥ 9 8 4
♦ A J 9 2	♦ K 8
♣ Q 8 7	♣ A K J

West	East
1♠	2NT <sup>(1)</sup>
3♥ <sup>(2)</sup>	4♣
4♦	4NT
5♥	6♠
Pass	

(1) Jacoby 2NT.  
 (2) Singleton or void in hearts.  
 West's 3♥ bid, showing a singleton or void, was music to East's ears — there could be no more than one heart loser. East cuebid 4♣ to show his club control.

West didn't have a great opening bid but it was easy to cuebid 4♦. That was all East needed to hear. When West showed two aces, East bid the (almost) laydown slam.

## Patience is a virtue

If partner opens 2♣, respond 2♦ unless you have a suit that is both long and strong.

You need 8 or more high-card points and at least a five-card suit with two of the top three honors or

three of the top five honors.

Otherwise, just make a waiting bid of 2♦.

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♣	Pass	?
♠Q954	♥A4	♦AQ752	♣108

Bid 2♦. Lots of points and an adequate suit, but jumping to 3♦ would crowd the auction. You're on your way to slam — take time to explore for the best trump suit.

♠84	♥AQJ1085	♥84	♣653
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Bid 2♥. Only 7 HCP but who cares? You're dying to talk about this suit, so bid it.

♠AJ754	♥K7	♦Q953	♣J4
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Bid 2♦. A nice hand with scattered values and a suit that can wait.

♠K854	♥75	♣53	♣KQJ98
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Bid 3♣. Show your excellent suit while you can. □

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