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Bridge Bidding Made Simple · Acol edition



CHAPTER 5

Raising Partner

Finding a fit, dummy points, raising and giving preference

Mike Smith

bridgescorer.com

1. Why a fit matters

When you and partner hold **eight or more trumps** between you, the defenders have at most five, and your long suits and short suits start working together. Finding that fit, and telling partner about it quickly, is one of the most important jobs in bidding.

The golden fit: eight or more cards in a suit between you. In a major, it usually means that suit should be trumps.

2. Counting "dummy points"

Once you know you have a fit, short suits in your hand become valuable: dummy can ruff the losers in declarer's hand. When you are **raising partner with four-card support**, add these to your high-card points:

In your hand	Add
A void	3
A singleton	2
A doubleton	1

> Only count dummy points when you have **four or more** of partner's trumps. Without a fit, a singleton is a weakness, not a strength.

3. Raising partner's major

Use your total (high-card points plus dummy points) to choose the level, as in Chapter 4:

Total with four-card support	Raise to
6–9	2
10–12	3 (invites game)
13 or more	4 (game)

In these examples partner has opened **1♠**.

♠ K 8 6 3
♥ 7
♦ Q 10 5 3
♣ J 9 4 2

6 points + 2 for the singleton = 8. Raise to **2♠**.

♠ Q 10 7 4
♥ 5
♦ A 8 6 3
♣ K 9 4 2

9 points + 2 for the singleton = 11. Jump to **3♠**.

♠ K J 8 4
♥ —
♦ A 9 7 5 3
♣ Q 8 6 2

10 points + 3 for the void = 13. Bid **4♠**.

4. When opener raises responder

When partner responds in a new suit at the one level, they promise **four or more** cards. With four-card support, opener raises, again choosing the level by strength:

Opener's points (with four-card support)	Raise to	Example after 1♦ – 1♥
12–15	2	2♥
16–18	3 (invites game)	3♥
19 or more	4 (game)	4♥

In these examples you opened **1♦** and partner responded **1♥**.

♠ 5
♥ A J 7 4
♦ K Q 8 3 2
♣ K 6 2

13 points and four hearts: raise to **2♥**.

♠ A
♥ K Q 7 4
♦ A Q 9 5 3
♣ J 6 2

16 points and four hearts: **3♥**, inviting game.

♠ A
♥ K Q 7 4
♦ A K J 5 3
♣ K 6 2

20 points: bid **4♥**.

5. Three-card support: showing it later

With only three of partner's suit, do not raise at once. Make your natural bid first. If partner then bids a second suit, you can **give preference**: go back to their first suit to show you like it better.

♠ K J 6 2
♥ Q 8 4
♦ 9 7 3
♣ 10 5 2

The bidding goes 1♥ – 1♠ – 2♣ – ? You have three hearts and two clubs. Bid **2♥**: "I prefer your first suit." It is not a raise, just a choice.

6. Summary

Situation	Bid
Four-card support for partner's major	Add dummy points, raise to 2 / 3 / 4 (6–9 / 10–12 / 13+)
Opener with four of responder's suit	Raise to 2 / 3 / 4 (12–15 / 16–18 / 19+)
Only three-card support	Make another bid first, give preference later

7. Test yourself

For 1–4, partner has opened **1♥**. What do you respond?

1. ♠ 8 2
♥ K 10 6 5
♦ Q 9 7 4
♣ J 8 3

2. ♠ A 9
♥ Q 10 8 3
♦ 7
♣ K 10 8 5 4 2

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

4. ♠ J 4
♥ Q 7 2
♦ K 10 8 5 3
♣ Q 6 4

5. You open **1♣** and partner responds **1♠**. 6. You open **1♦** and partner responds **1♥**. What do you rebid?

5. ♠ K Q 6 3
♥ A 5
♦ 8 2
♣ A K J 7 4

6. ♠ K 7
♥ Q 10 5 3
♦ A Q 8 4 2
♣ J 6

Answers

1. 2♥. 6 + 1 for the doubleton = 7.

2. 3♥. 9 + 2 for the singleton = 11: invite game.

3. 4♥. 11 + 3 for the void = 14.

4. 1NT. Only three hearts, so no raise yet, and not enough to bid 2♦ (which needs 9).

5. 3♠. 17 points and four spades: invite game.

6. 2♥. 12 points and four hearts: a simple raise.

Next: Chapter 6, Opener's Rebids. Free lessons and challenge hands to play: **bridgescorer.com/learn**

About this guide. There are many versions of Acol, and clubs, teachers and books do not all agree on every detail. This chapter describes one common, straightforward version for learners. We do not claim it is the only or the best way: if your teacher or club plays something different, follow them. What matters most is that you and your partner agree.

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