

Part 3: What Opener Needs to Reverse

In order to reverse, opener should have the following:

1. About 17+ HCP (could be a bit less with distribution)
2. A 5-card (or longer) suit
3. A second, higher-ranked 4-card (or longer) suit
4. The lower-ranked suit **MUST** be longer than the higher-ranked suit

Opener reverses by bidding his lower-ranked suit at the one-level, and then bidding his higher-ranked suit at the two-level, without jumping.

Here are some examples of hands that are suitable for a reverse by opener:

1. S: KQJ4	2. S: 7	3. S: K8
H: 4	H: AK984	H: AQ65
D: AKJ98	D: 5	D: AQJ842
C: K52	C: AK10764	C: 5

- With hand #1, opener bids 1D and hopes to reverse by bidding 2S.
- With hand #2, opener bids 1C and hopes to reverse by bidding 2H.
- With hand #3, opener bids 1D and hopes to reverse by bidding 2H.

Even though these hands are suitable for a reverse by opener, opener may not be able to reverse. It depends upon what responder bids.

- With hand #1, opener bids 1D and can't reverse unless responder bids 1NT or 2C.
- With hand #2, opener bids 1C and can't reverse unless responder bids 1S or 1NT.
- With hand #3, opener bids 1D and can't reverse unless opener bids 1S, 1NT or 2C.

Here are some examples of hands that are NOT suitable for a reverse by opener:

1. S: AQ64	2. S: AK752	3. S: 8	4. S: 72
H: 4	H: KJ98	H: KQJ65	H: 85
D: AKJ9	D: AQ5	D: AK842	D: AQJ7
C: K542	C: 6	C: K5	C: KQ754

1. You can't reverse with hand #1 because it doesn't have a 5-card suit. Instead, open 1D. If partner bids 1H, then bid 1S. If partner bids 1S, then bid 3S. If partner bids 1NT, then bid 2C.

2. You can't reverse with hand #2 because your longest suit (Spades) is higher-ranking than your second suit (Hearts). Open 1S, planning to rebid 2H. If partner raises Spades, bid 3H (game try).

3. You can't reverse with hand #3 because your two suits are the same length. Open 1H, planning to rebid Diamonds twice to show 5-5.

4. You can't reverse with hand #4 because you're not strong enough. Open 1C. If partner bids 1D, raise to 2D. If partner bids 1H, 1S or 1NT, rebid 2C. Do NOT bid 2D in this case because it is a reverse! Yes, you should ideally have six Clubs in order to rebid them. But bidding 2C is less of a lie than reversing. (Note: Some might prefer to open this hand with 1D, planning to rebid 2C. There are pluses and minuses to this approach. But either way, don't open this hand with 1C and plan to reverse by bidding 2D. You're not strong enough for that.)