

## Splinter Bids

A **splinter bid** is a double-jump in a new suit showing a singleton or void in that suit, at least 4-card support for partner's suit, game-going values -- and slam interest if partner has the right hand. Essentially, any double jump in a new suit after partner has bid is a splinter bid. The hardest part of playing splinter bids is recognizing them when they occur.

**Splinter bids occur most often when partner opens a major.** These are all splinter bids:

- 1♠ -- 4♣
- 1♠ -- 4♦
- 1♠ -- 4♥
- 1♥ -- 3♠
- 1♥ -- 4♣
- 1♥ -- 4♦

In these cases, the splinter bidder should have 11-15 points in support of partner's suit. In the first auction, for example, 4♣ might show a hand like this one: ♠KJ72 ♥AJ75 ♦9 ♣K1053

**Splinter bids can also be made when partner opens a minor.** These are all splinter bids:

- 1♣ -- 3♦
- 1♣ -- 3♥
- 1♣ -- 3♠
- 1♦ -- 4♣
- 1♦ -- 3♥
- 1♦ -- 3♠

In these cases, because opener might only have a 3- or 4-card minor suit and because minor-suit game contracts require more points to make, the splinter bidder should have both a more robust suit and a more robust hand. In the last auction, for example, 3♠ might show a hand like this one: ♠6 ♥AJ3 ♦KQ1096 ♣K1076

**Splinter bids can also be made by opener after responder has bid a new suit. These auctions all end with splinter bids:**

- 1♣ -- 1♥ -- 4♦
- 1♣ -- 1♥ -- 3♠
- 1♣ -- 1♠ -- 4♥
- 1♣ -- 1♠ -- 4♦
- 1♦ -- 1♥ -- 4♣
- 1♦ -- 1♥ -- 3♠
- 1♦ -- 1♠ -- 4♥
- 1♦ -- 1♠ -- 4♣
- 1♥ -- 1♠ -- 4♣
- 1♥ -- 1♠ -- 4♦

These splinter bids also show a singleton or void in the new suit, 4+-card support for responder's suit, game-going values -- and slam interest if partner has the right hand. In these cases, because responder might only have 5-6 points, the splinter bidder (in this case, the opening bidder) should have 17-20 points in support of partner's suit. In the last auction, for example, 4♦ might show this hand: ♠AJ76 ♥AK753 ♦5 ♣AQ6

### **How should you respond to partner's splinter bid?**

Reevaluate your hand. Partner's splinter promises game-going strength, but not slam-going strength. She's asking if you have the right hand to bid slam based on what you know about her hand. You are evaluating your hand now based on how well your hands fit, not necessarily on your combined HCPs. Things to consider:

- Partner has shown support for your suit and shortness in another suit. Do you have Axxx in partner's short suit or do you have AKQxx in that suit?
- Partner's bid implies some length in the two side suits. Do you have honors in those suits that might fit well with partner's presumed honors or do you have 3 small cards - and therefore potential losers - in one of those suits? Do you have shortness in one of those side suits that will allow you to cross-ruff the hand?

## Quick Quiz

Partner opens 1♥. What do you bid with ♠AQJ ♥K1053 ♦4 ♣K10982?

Partner opens 1♣. What do you bid with ♠AK3 ♥5♦QJ7 ♣KJ10965?

Partner opens 1♠. What do you bid with ♠AQ72 ♥AKJ3 ♦4 ♣KJ105?

Partner opens 1♥. You bid 1♠ holding ♠KQJ53 ♥K64 ♦8742 ♣A. Partner bids 4♦.  
What's your next bid?

You open 1♥. Partner bids 4♣. What do you bid with ♠Q107 ♥AKJ75 ♦J4 ♣QJ10?

Partner opens 1♦. What do you bid with ♠J7 ♥KQ8 ♦J984 ♣Q1053?

Partner opens 1♥. You bid 1♠ holding ♠KQ1053 ♥62 ♦A8652 ♣8. Partner bids 4♦.  
What's your next bid?

Partner opens 1♠. What do you bid with ♠K972 ♥KJ7 ♦4♣J10832?

