

Forcing and non-forcing bids

A bid is **forcing** if partner is **not allowed to pass**

Types of forcing bids:

1. Artificial bids

An artificial bid is always forcing.

For example, 2♣ opening, 2♣ (stayman) and transfer responses to partner's 1NT opening, 4NT or 4♣ ace asks are all forcing.

2. A new suit bid by an unpassed hand

A change of suit by either opener or responder is forcing.

For example, a change of suit by responder at the 1 level shows 6+ points while a change of suit at the 2 level shows 10+ points.

In both these responses are *unlimited*; that is, responder has not limited the strength of their hand and so opener must describe their hand further.

A change of suit by opener is also forcing (although in some systems opener must jump in a new suit (a jump shift) to show a very strong hand)

When is a change of suit not forcing?

- When partner is a passed hand

For example: P – 1♥
1♠ – ? *1S is NOT forcing and opener can pass*

- When partner has bid NT

For example: 1♦ – 1NT
2♣ – ? *2♣ is NOT forcing and says I don't like 1NT, pick one of my suits*

Exception: If opener jump rebids in NT (showing 18-19 depending on your 1NT range) a new suit by responder is forcing.

For example: 1♦ – 1♠
2NT – 3♥ *Opener is showing 18-19, denying 4 spades. Responder is showing 5 spades and 4 hearts*

If you know you should be in game but are unsure where or are exploring slam you MUST make a forcing bid

What is a limit bid?

A bid is a **limit bid** when it defines the strength of the bidder's hand

For example, a raise of partner's suit or a no trump opening or rebid are examples of limit bids.