

BID THESE HANDS WITH ME.  
Hands by John Rayner. Answers by Barbara Seagram  
Answers are the same whether you are playing 2/1 or Standard  
Opponents are silent throughout

**West hands**

Deal #1 **Dealer**

♠AQ543  
♥AJ9  
♦K42  
♣32

Deal #2 **Dealer**

♠A7652  
♥4  
♦AKJ82  
♣43

Deal #3

♠A1076  
♥K976  
♦8  
♣A765

Deal #4 **Dealer**

♠K43  
♥A32  
♦AKQ543  
♣4

Deal #5

♠KQ52  
♥2  
♦AKQJ32  
♣A4

Deal #6

♠A8  
♥84  
♦A543  
♣98765

**East hands**

Deal #1

♠K2  
♥KQ543  
♦A53  
♣J64

Deal #2

♠K843  
♥AK97  
♦95  
♣765

Deal #3 **Dealer**

♠KQ83  
♥A3  
♦AJ65  
♣432

Deal #4

♠A952  
♥Q54  
♦762  
♣K103

Deal #5 **Dealer**

♠AJ1043  
♥AK5  
♦54  
♣652

Deal #6 - **Dealer**

♠KQ932  
♥AQ92  
♦K2  
♣43

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## ANSWERS TO BID THESE HANDS WITH ME

### Answers are the same whether or not you are playing 2/1

1.

1S - 2H promises 5 Hearts at least  
3H - 4H

2.

1S - 3S  
or if you are playing Bergen Raises  
1S - 3D

West should accept the invitation to game with a second good quality five-card suit. He will next bid 4S on either auction.

3.

-----1D  
1H - 1S  
3S - 4S

3S because West would bid 2S with only

S A1076  
H J976  
D 8  
C A765

Hence West's need to bid 3S to show an invitational hand with four card Spade support.

4.

1D - 1S  
3D - 3N

West's bid of 3D shows 16-18 and a six-card Diamond suit of quality.

5.

-----1S  
2N - 4S Min hand: No singleton or void  
4N - 5H 2 key cards and no Q of trump  
7N

2N is Jacoby 2NT. East shows no singleton or void in her hand and a minimum hand. Thus West knows he most likely is looking at six Diamond tricks and five Spade tricks plus two side Aces. Looks like 13 tricks in NT.

Give yourself high marks if you made it to 7S.

6.

-----1S  
1N - 2H  
2S - Pass

By bidding only 2S next, West shows a hand with 6-9 points who prefers Spades to Hearts. After all, he knows that East has at least five Spades but MAY have only four Hearts. This is called simple preference. With 6-9 and THREE Spades, West would have bid 2S right away.

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## ALEX'S MONTHLY BRIDGE TIP LIMIT RAISES

1S - 3S  
or  
1H - 3H

Shows 10-12 points and four-card support unless you are playing Bergen Raises in which case you bid 3D in response to partner's opening of one of a major. This, by agreement, will show that same hand.

e.g. you hold

S Q1086  
H K82  
D AJ82  
C 92

Partner opens 1S, this is a perfect Limit Raise.

The Limit Raise is an invitational bid and invites partner to bid game with just a bit more than a minimum opening bid.

### WHAT DOES OPENING BIDDER NEED TO GO TO GAME?

Any time you have a six-card major, bid game. Remember to always give yourself extra points for length when partner supports your suit, OVER and ABOVE the length points originally assigned.

e.g. You hold:

S AJ8765  
H 7  
D KQJ5  
C 54

You have 11 HCP and two length points = 13 so you open 1S. Partner bids 3S (or 3D, playing Bergen). Immediately, you add one extra point for the fifth card in the suit which has been supported and two extra points for each remaining card. You now have 16 points. Partner has 10-12. You accept the invitation and bid 4S.

With a minimum hand (13 points including distribution) and a five-card suit, do not accept partner's invitation. Just say "Pass." Or bid 3 of the major playing Bergen and partner must now pass.

e.g. You open 1H. Partner bids 3H (or 3D, playing Bergen). Your hand is:

S 87  
H KJ985  
D KQJ4  
C Q7

IF you are 5-5 or better with honours in your long suits, DO accept partner's invitation. Five-five, come alive!!! See below.

S 7  
H KJ875  
D AQJ98  
C 65

This is a minimum hand but it has enormous playing strength. Side five-card suits can often be developed into lots of extra winning tricks. Bid game with above hand if partner makes a limit raise.

One more: Partner has opened 1 Spade. What will you respond with this hand?

S J943  
H 6  
D AQJ6  
C Q954

- a) 3S or 3D playing Bergen
- b) 4H Splinter
- c) 2C
- d) 2NT Jacoby 2NT

a) and c) are NOT correct choices. This is NOT a limit raise. When you have four-card support, your singleton is now worth 3 points. You have 13 dummy points. Partner can pass. Do not invite game when you wish to insist on game.

If you are playing Splinters, DO bid 4H showing a singleton or void in Hearts. Do not splinter with a singleton Ace or King.

If you are NOT playing Splinters, then do use Jacoby 2NT which shows 13 or more points and at least four of partner's major suit trump. Opener then has a prescribed set of rebids.

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## THE LAW OF TOTAL TRICKS

You have all heard of the Law of Total Tricks. This was developed some time ago by French bridge theoretician Jean-René Vernes in 1969. It spread like wildfire when American expert Larry Cohen popularized it with his two books "To Bid or Not to Bid" and "Following the Law".

The Law of Total Tricks is merely a bidding guideline: How to Know How High to Go!

Very simply put, when competing in the bidding (both sides are in the act) With 8 trumps between you and partner, bid to the 2 level.

With 9 trumps, bid to the 3 level.  
With 10 trumps, bid to the 4 level.

So, if the responder to the opening bid of 1S has

S Q63  
H 75  
D 543  
C 76543

He will still pass. He will not bid 2S as that shows 6-9 points. That has not changed.

BUT if the bidding were to proceed:

1S – P – P – 2H and now two passes and back to him, he should now bid 2S, since between the partnership, they have 8 trumps. There is no guarantee that your side will MAKE 2S but if you did not bid this, then the likelihood of the opponents making 2H is high. Thus, if you are minus 50, it is better than being minus 110.

If you had  
S K754  
H 87  
D QJ832  
C 65

If opener bids 1S and RHO passes, you will still bid only 2S (since bidding 3S would show 10-12 points, unless partnership is playing Bergen Raises). BUT if the opponents now compete in Hearts or Clubs, then Responder should now compete to 3S, knowing that their side has 9 trumps. (Yes, playing Bergen Raises, you would bid 3C.)

With 5 trumps, responder would bid 1S – 4S immediately with 2-9 points. Some teachers call this the Weak Freak.  
e.g.

S Q9532  
H 5  
D Q9432  
C 54

The Law of Total Tricks is also used strategically when partner preempts.

Let's say Dealer opens with 2S and his partner has:

S Q65  
H 76  
D A9865  
C 762

The responder should immediately bid 3S. This says: "Partner, you have trash, I have more trash". This is based on the Law of Total Tricks. Opener has 6-10 HCP (give him an average of 8 HCP) and Responder has 6 HCP. 14 HCP between the two hands. The opponents have 26 HCP between them. The opponents should be bidding and making game. You want to make it difficult for them. Give Responder one more Spade (above hand) and one less Heart and Responder would bid 4S instead, compounding the preempt.

Use the Law of Total Tricks only when your side does NOT have 26 points. Do not lie about your points. Remember that 1H-P-2H still means 6-9 points. The Law of Total Tricks applies at the 2, 3 or 4 level, not at the 5 level.

If you use the Law wisely, it will take some of the guesswork away in knowing whether to bid on or not, when the opponents are in the act.

Adjustments to the Law: If you have Queens and Jacks in opponents' suit, your hand is flawed. Downgrade your hand. Also downgrade if you have poorly situated honours (Canadian spelling!) in opponent's suit. e.g. you have Spades Kx and your LHO (Left Hand Opponent) has bid Spades. You know that LHO is not going to lead a Spade. He will wait till his partner is on lead to lead a Spade through your King. Your King is doomed. Downgrade your hand. You have an unhappy King. BUT if RHO had bid Spades, you have a Happy King (or a working King) so you can upgrade your hand.

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# TAKE ALL YOUR CHANCES by EDDIE KANTAR

North

S. K842  
H. K75  
D. AQJ102  
C. A

South

S. 3  
H. AQJ109643  
D. 98  
C. 104

After you (South) open 4H, partner checks to make sure you have an ace and you get to 6H. Opening lead: C King: Plan the play.

You have two possible losers, a spade and a diamond, and you have two chances to get rid of at least one or them.

You can take the diamond finesse. If it wins, you make an overtrick, if it loses you are down one as the Spade Ace is the setting trick. Alternatively, you can lead up to the S King first. If West has the ace, you won't need the diamond finesse as a diamond goes off on the S King assuming West goes up with the ace. If West plays low, the king wins and you can take the diamond finesse for an overtrick. If East tops the SK with the ace, you still have the diamond finesse available.

Tip:

When two lines of play are available, take the one that gives you a chance (we call this staying alive!!) to use the other if the first fails. Lead up to the S King to stay alive.

Percentage-wise if you lead up to the SK first and that doesn't work and then take the diamond finesse you have a 75% chance of making the hand. (One of two finesses.)

If you put all of your eggs in the diamond finesse basket you only have a 50% chance of making the hand.

The West hand: S.A965    H.2    D.7643    C.KQJ9

The East hand: S. QJ107    H. 8    D. K5    C. 876532