



# Adventures in Bridge

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## *This Week in Bridge*

### **(379) Raising Opener's Minor**

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Levels: 5 of 10 (2 of 6)

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#### **General**

When partner opens the bidding with a minor suit then our primary job as Responder is to search for a Major suit fit (that usually means bidding a 4+card Major if we have one). But if we do not have a 4+card Major then we are usually looking to bid notrump (or next most interesting place to play). But when we have a fit for our partner's minor suit then we want to make sure we have good agreements about how to raise them. This is particularly true when we have a good hand and need to show our fit and help partner decide about the best game to play.

#### **Inverted Minors – Limit Raise+**

When we do not have a Major suit but we wish to bid, we may choose to raise partner's minor suit. When we raise partner's minor suit, we assume that we have a fit if we have 4-card support for ♦, but we need 5-card support to assume we have a ♣ fit. With 10+ points we can raise partner's suit to the 2-level.

1♣    2♣\*    Inverted minors, 10+ points, 5+card ♣  
1♦    2♦\*    Inverted minors, 10+ points, 4+card ♦

This treatment is called *inverted minors*.

#### *Example 1*

♠ A52

♥ 43

♦ AQ83

♣ J943

1♦    2♦\*

Here we raise to 2♦ to show invitational values or better, 4+card ♦ support, and no 4-card Major.

These inverted minor raises are forcing for 1-round. The auction will either proceed to game or it stop in 2NT or our fit at the 3-level. By showing our values at a low level we can preserve a good amount of bidding space to determine if we can play 3NT and which member of the partnership should be the declarer.



## Weak Raise of Partner's Minor

Another option for a way to raise partner's minor suit is to jump to it at the 3-level.

- 1♣     3♣\*     *Weak Raise, 5+card ♣, 0-5 HCP (3-6 HCP vulnerable)*  
1♦     3♦\*     *Weak Raise, 4+card ♦, 0-5 HCP (3-6 HCP vulnerable)*

This weak raise is a way to let partner know that we have a large fit (applying the expected Law of Total Tricks). It also serves as a destructive bid in that it takes the opponents' bidding space away from them. This is useful tool for putting pressure on our LHO, who likely has a very good hand.

### Example 2

- ♠ 4  
♥ 732  
♦ JT93  
♣ K8543  
1♣     3♣\*

Here we jump to 3♣ as a preemptive bid – a weak raise!

## Minimum Valued Hand with Minor Suit Fit

You may have noticed that with a 2-level raise showing 10+ points and a 3-level raise being weak that we do not have a way to show a minimum valued hand (6-9 points) with a fit for partner's suit. When we have a hand like this, we usually just respond 1NT.

### Example 3

- ♠ 93  
♥ K43  
♦ KJ52  
♣ J984  
1♦     1NT

Here we do not have a way to show a ♦ fit and our values, so we start by bidding 1NT, showing our values. If we play it there, we are OK with that. If the opponents compete in the bidding, then we may be able to show our fit for partner's suit later!



## Splinters over Minors

We can use a double jump shift in response to a minor suit in a similar way as we do opposite a Major suit opening. This is a splinter, showing 5+card support, game-forcing values (12+ points), and shortness in the suit we bid.

Example

1♣    \_\_

- 3♦    *Splinter*, 5+card ♣, 12+ points, Singleton or Void in ♦
- 3♥    *Splinter*, 5+card ♣, 12+ points, Singleton or Void in ♥
- 3♠    *Splinter*, 5+card ♣, 12+ points, Singleton or Void in ♠

1♦    \_\_?

- 3♥    *Splinter*, 5+card ♦, 12+ points, Singleton or Void in ♥
- 3♠    *Splinter*, 5+card ♦, 12+ points, Singleton or Void in ♠
- 4♣    *Splinter*, 5+card ♦, 12+ points, Singleton or Void in ♣

A splinter after a minor suit opening establishes that we will play a game. It also lets partner know which suit we are worried about for 3NT. Partner can lead us to 3NT or 5-minor or even 6-minor.



## Raising Partner's Minor in Competition Table

When partner opens the bidding with 1-minor and RHO comes into the bidding then we have a very different approach to "raising partner". Here is a summary of our options in these competitive bidding auctions.

<i>Partner opens 1-minor - RHO Interferes</i>	<b>vs. X</b>	<b>vs. Overcall</b>	<b>vs. Jump Overcall</b>
<b>Raise</b>	5-9 pts 4+card support ♦ 5+card support ♣	5-9 pts 4+card support ♦ 5+card support ♣	Raise to 3-Level: 7 to 11- pts, 4+card support ♦ 5+card support ♣
<b>Jump Raise</b>	0-5 pts 4+card support ♦ 5+card support ♣	0-5 pts 4+card support ♦ 5+card support ♣	(n/a)
<b>Bid Game</b>	0-8 pts (LOTT)	0-8 pts (LOTT)	11+ to 14 pts, 4+card support ♦ 5+card support ♣ <i>"Don't preempt a preempt."</i>
<b>Bid 2NT</b>	*10+ pts 4+card support ♦ 5+card support ♣ (Jordan)	10+ to 12- pts Natural (stopper in Opp suit.)	10+-12- pts, Natural (stopper in Opp suit.)
<b>Cuebid (Q) Opp's suit</b>	(n/a)	10+ pts 4+card support ♦ 5+card support ♣ (Q=LR+)	<i>Western Cuebid – Asking for a stopper for 3NT.</i>
<b>Jump Q</b>	(n/a)	<i>Splinter</i> , 12+ pts, 4+c support, 0-1card Opp suit.	(Rare)

*\*LOTT = Law of Total Tricks. This is the idea that we "compete to the size of our fit." We also try to do this as quickly as possible – we jump there.*

## Conclusion

When partner opens the bidding with 1-minor our primary focus is on finding a Major suit fit. But when we do not have a 4-card Major, we turn our focus to showing our values and our minor suits. When we have a fit for partner's minor, we want to let them know that, while communicating our strength. You and partner need to have a good collection of tools for communicating with each other when you have a minor suit fit!