

## WHAT DOES THIS AUCTION MEAN TO YOU?

This is your hand (North):

All Vul      ♠ A K 4  
                  ♥ 10 9  
                  ♦ A J 10 7 6 5  
                  ♣ K 5

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	Pass
1NT (12-14)	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	?		

Perhaps you could have doubled 1NT rather than overcalling but, regardless, now you have to have to make an appropriate bid. What is going on with this auction?

At the table, you now raised to 4♥ and this is what happened:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	Pass
1NT (12-14)	2♦	Pass	2♥
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Double	?		

Should you leave partner in 4♥ X or should you remove them?

The answer lies in understanding the auction.

Did you notice that partner was a passed hand, then bid and rebid hearts?

So, they hold 6 hearts. Why did they not open 2♥ (or multi 2)?

Right – they have 4 spades, and a hand unsuited to a weak 2 opening bid.

That means they will have 0-1 diamond at most, especially given the auction.

Your hand has become a lot better for them – with your ♠A-K, your ♦A and little other ‘wastage’ in the suit, and the ♣K. Leave them in 4♥ X, which will make!

Running to 5♦ X should, in fact, go down 2 tricks on a heart lead, with the ♦9 promoting on a third heart lead, assuming you split your diamonds when they are led from dummy.

	♠ A K 4	
	♥ 10 9	
	♦ A J 10 7 6 5	
	♣ K 5	
♠ 10 9 3		♠ J 6 2
♥ A Q J		♥ 4 2
♦ K Q 3		♦ 9 8 4
♣ 10 7 6 3		♣ Q J 9 4 2
	♠ Q 8 7 5	
	♥ K 8 7 6 5 3	
	♦ 2	
	♣ A 8	

Are these inferences you think about as an auction develops? These inferences are far more marked when partner is a passed hand.

Another similar scenario occurs when you are a passed hand, the opponent opens 1NT and then you enter the auction showing a single-suited hand with a major. The implication is that you have one 6-card major and 4 cards in the other major – and often your long major is not as strong, as in the above hand (which is what South would have done had North passed).

Auctions can be full of inferences. Here are some examples:

#### EXAMPLE 1

1♥		1♠
2♣		2♦ (4 <sup>th</sup> suit forcing)
2♠		

This 2♠ bid is, most often, your default bid with a tricky hand – i.e. 2-5-2-4 and no diamond stopper. Occasionally, you may choose to rebid 2♥ if your heart suit is solid enough to sound like a 6-card suit. However, 2♠ may be a doubleton spade (especially a doubleton honour).

#### EXAMPLE 2

1♥		1♠
2♣		2♦ (4 <sup>th</sup> suit forcing)
3♠		

This jump to 3♠ is definitely 3-card spade support. Obviously you have 3-5-1-4 (or 3-5-0-5 or 3-6-0-4). I tend to use it to show a non-minimum hand too, encouraging partner if they have slam interest.

#### EXAMPLE 3

1♦		1♠
2♣		2♥ (4 <sup>th</sup> suit forcing)
3♥		

This is a matter of partnership agreement. In a 'past bridge life', it was used to show a strong hand. Nowadays, I use it to show 4 cards in hearts, therefore the shape is almost always a 0-4-5-4. I find this more useful, given that it is possible to have a 4-4 fit in hearts (usually only in hearts after 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing).

#### EXAMPLE 4

1♣	Pass	1♠	2♥
Double (1)	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠			

(1) Showing a good hand (not a support double)

This shows a very good hand, game forcing, with 3-card spade support. There is plenty of space to explore for slam.

#### EXAMPLE 5

1♥

2♣

2♠

1♠

2♥ (false preference)

Given that opener supposedly supports with 3-cards in spades and a minimum hand, this auction guarantees a 3-5-1-4 (or more distributional, most likely 3-5-0-5), but it also shows a non-minimum hand, at least 15+ HCP, though not a game force.

Whenever responder gives false preference, bidding again shows extra values within your non-game forcing hand (12-18 HCP), therefore you are in the upper range (good 15-18 HCP).

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