

BACK TO BASICS

How to show an Unbalanced hand

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Unbalanced Shapes

Unbalanced hands (5/4's, 5/5's, 6/5's & 6 card suits) form the second most common hand type. These hands are likely to be played in a trump fit which is why we 'bid the shape out'. The rebid defines our hand type.

Showing a 5/4

13-18 HCP

The basic premise in bridge is that we always look at our longest suit first and if it satisfies the minimum length requirement we open in that suit. If we follow up with a rebid of a lower ranking suit at the 2-level, we are showing 5 cards in our first suit and 4 cards in our second suit.

Example 1

♠85
♥A2
♦KJ982
♣KQ52

After opening 1♦ with the given hand and hearing a 1♠ response, your rebid is 2♣. Showing at least 5♦ & 4♣.

If partner's response is at the 1-level and has left sufficient room for you to bid your second suit at the 1-level, do so, there is no need to jump in you second suit!

Example 2

♠KQ85
♥A2
♦KJ932
♣85

After opening 1♦ with the given hand and hearing a 1H response, your rebid is 1♠. This may only show 4♦ & 4♠ but conserves space for later bids.

19+ HCP

With 5/4 and 19+ HCP, all you need to hear from partner is a minimum response and you have the combined strength for game. To confirm these values to partner you must jump shift into your second suit.

Example 3

♠K5
♥A2
♦AK982
♣KQ52

After opening 1♦ with the given hand and hearing a 1♠ response, your rebid is a jump to 3♣. Showing at least 5♦ and 4♣ and 19+ points.

Showing a 6-card suit

Six card suits are shown by rebidding the suit. An easy way to split opener's ranges is via mini, midi and maxi.

MINI (12-14 points) Open 1 of suit and rebid suit at 2-level

MIDI (15-17 points) Open 1 of a suit and rebid suit at 3-level

MAXI (18+ points) Open 1 of a suit and rebid 2NT or open 2♣

Example 4

♠8
♥AQJ762
♦KQ4
♣A52

After opening 1♥ with the given hand and hearing a 1♠ response, your rebid is a jump to 3♥. Showing at least 6♥ and 16 to 18 points.

How to show a 6/4 shape

6/4 hand shapes are shown by bidding the 6-card suit 1st, 4-card suit 2nd, then repeating the 6-card suit.

Example 5

♠AQJ653
♥62
♦KQ84
♣2

After opening 1♠ with the given hand and hearing a 2♣ response, your rebid is 2♦. If partner bids 2NT, you rebid 2♠.

How to show a 5/5 shape

5/5 hand shapes are shown by bidding the higher-ranking suit 1st, the lower ranking suit 2nd and repeating the lower ranking suit on your 3rd bid.

Example 6

♠KQ873
♥AK542
♦4
♣52

After opening 1♠ (higher-ranking) & hearing a 2♦ response, opener bids 2♥ on their 2nd call. When partner bids again, opener repeats their hearts.

How to show a 6/5 shape

6/5 hand shapes are shown by bidding the 6-card suit 1st & bidding the 5-card suit on the 2nd & 3rd call.

Example 7

♠AQ765
♥AKJ762
♦4
♣5

Following your 1♥ opening, partner bids 2♣. You follow with a 2♠ bid on your 2nd call and responder repeats their clubs. Opener bids 3♠ to show the 6/5 shape.

Responder's 2nd bid after Opener shows an Unbalanced shape

Responder's options after opener's Unbalanced rebid are;

- bid an appropriate game
- show preference to one of Opener's suits
- rebid a 6-card suit of their own
- bid 2NT or 3NT with extra HCP

HAND 1 – BIDDING A 6/4 SHAPE

D 1	N undefined	W	N	E	S
	♠ J6		P	P	1♠
	♥ K62	P	2♦	P	2♥
	♦ KQ863	P	2NT	P	3♣
	♣ Q43	P	4♠	P	P
W undefined		E undefined			
♠ A1052		♠ 9			
♥ 85		♥ J1097			
♦ A1052		♦ J9			
♣ 1092		♣ KJ8765			
	S undefined				
	♠ KQ8743				
	♥ AQ43				
	♦ 74				
	♣ A				
		4♠ S		NS: 0	EW: 0

HAND 2 – BIDDING A 6/4 SHAPE & THE JUMP SHIFT (19+)

D 8	N undefined	W	N	E	S
	♠ K9843	1♥	P	1♠	P
	♥ 975	3♣	P	4♣	P
	♦ Q1052	4♥	P	P	P
	♣ 7				
W undefined		E undefined			
♠ 2		♠ AQJ6			
♥ AKJ864		♥ Q3			
♦ AK		♦ 643			
♣ K863		♣ 9542			
	S undefined				
	♠ 1075				
	♥ 102				
	♦ J987				
	♣ AQJ10				
		4♥ W		NS: 0	EW: 0

HAND 3 – BIDDING A 5/5 HAND

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; text-align: center; margin: 0 auto;">D 1</div>	N undefined ♠ AKQ32 ♥ A8752 ♦ K2 ♣ 5	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>W</td><td>N</td><td>E</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>1♣</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>2♣</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>2♥</td><td>P</td><td>2NT</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>3♥</td><td>P</td><td>4♥</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td></td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	1♣	P	P	2♣	P	2♥	P	2NT	P	3♥	P	4♥	P	P	P	
	W	N	E	S																		
1♣	P	P	2♣																			
P	2♥	P	2NT																			
P	3♥	P	4♥																			
P	P	P																				
W undefined ♠ J974 ♥ 9 ♦ J975 ♣ KJ86	E undefined ♠ 108 ♥ QJ106 ♦ Q1084 ♣ Q104																					
	S undefined ♠ 65 ♥ K43 ♦ A63 ♣ A9732	4♥ N NS: 0 EW: 0																				

HAND 4 – BIDDING A 6/5 HAND

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; text-align: center; margin: 0 auto;">D 8</div>	N undefined ♠ Q1092 ♥ KJ9 ♦ K1042 ♣ 73	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>W</td><td>N</td><td>E</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>1♣</td><td>P</td><td>1♥</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>2♣</td><td>P</td><td>2♠</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>2NT</td><td>P</td><td>3♠</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>4♠</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	1♣	P	1♥	P	2♣	P	2♠	P	2NT	P	3♠	P	4♠	P	P	P
	W	N	E	S																		
1♣	P	1♥	P																			
2♣	P	2♠	P																			
2NT	P	3♠	P																			
4♠	P	P	P																			
W undefined ♠ 863 ♥ 7 ♦ A75 ♣ AKJ864	E undefined ♠ AK754 ♥ A86532 ♦ 6 ♣ 5																					
	S undefined ♠ J ♥ Q104 ♦ QJ983 ♣ Q1092	4♠ E NS: 0 EW: 0																				